

POLITICAL MARKETING, WITH REFERENCE TO BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

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Abstract: With the abolition of the one-party system and the introduction of a multi-party political system, there were preconditions created for the emergence of a political market, at which political parties compete, i.e. a kind of market competition, to win as much political participation at the market as possible. In such circumstances, there is a need for a marketing approach in politics that helps in more efficient and effective “political” sales. The political market consists of political actors - as elements on the side of sales, and the electorate - as an element on the side of the demand. In such conditions, politics uses the existing, developed methods and techniques of commercial marketing, during the process of “selling” politicians and political parties on the political market. Over time, the concept of political marketing was introduced. Political marketing is the overall content of the operations of political parties through their activities, which are manifested through seeking the answers to the following questions: how do voters choose? what influences their commitment? and how can the electorate be acted upon? The application of political marketing in Bosnia and Herzegovina is still far below the required level, but there is an evident increase in the application of political marketing.

Key words: politics, political market, political marketing, elections, parties ...

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INTRODUCTION

Political marketing originated as a consequence of the understanding that there is an electorate on the political market the trust of which a political party or political figure should gain for a certain political program, i.e. for a certain political entity. Political marketing manifests its activities through interaction with society, which depends on the nature of the political system, electoral model, position, role and development of means of communication, tradition and culture, as well as economic development.

1. THE CONCEPT OF POLITICAL MARKETING

With the increasingly pronounced and developed social freedoms, the degree of liberalization and democratization of relations, there was a need for individuals and interest groups to gain a comparative advantage over competitors, i.e. their political opponents, which led to the development of political marketing. The development of mass media has created new information and communication systems, which are more efficient, cheaper and more accessible to users, that have enabled the development of new techniques of political marketing aiming to shape public opinion. With a carefully planned campaign and tailored communication, political parties, interest groups and individuals reach their targeted audiences. By influencing the attitudes and opinions of precisely these target audiences, they try to ensure victory in elections and/or other forms of political action.

Political marketing is a set of techniques aimed at improving the acceptability (of certain political parties, programs, interest groups, persons) of a certain electoral potential, bringing it closer to as many voters as possible, making them noticeably different from other persons or opponents and with a minimum amount of investment funds to optimize the number of votes received (Bongrand, 1997).

Definitions of political marketing can generally be divided into two basic groups, as theorists still disagree on whether political marketing is a science, or a skill. Newman belongs to a group of authors who believe that marketing principles from commercial marketing are transferred to the political market. Political marketing is defined as the application of marketing principles and procedures in political campaigns by various

individuals and organizations (Newman, 2000). However, Shaffer offers a diametrically opposite definition based on Lucka's more pessimistic view. He considered any expansion of marketing into fields outside of business activities to be "evil" because he believed that only business companies sell products (churches do not sell religion and political parties do not sell specific services) - (Shaffer, 2006).

According to one of Kotler's definitions, the political marketing is reduced to the "art of attracting" votes, so the "political marketing is reduced to the "science in action" (Kotler, 1982). It developed with the art of eclectic merging of the principles of scientific marketing (research, sales, marketing of the organization) which became "attractive" to the political domain. A similar view is held by Henneberg, who says that "political parties use marketing instruments as part of their electoral activities, ... and in addition to political parties, the same techniques are used by organizations within the party, activist groups and the executive power" (Henneberg & O'Shaughnessy, 2007).

Thus, these definitions emphasize that political marketing is not a special science, but a skill that uses principles and techniques from other sciences.

Slavujević bases his view of political marketing on his view of political communication and political propaganda. Political marketing can be defined as a commercialized variant of political propaganda focused on specific political goals and shorter time actions, which, in the environment of political pluralism and media autonomy, are realized through publicity and paid advertising (Slavujević, 2009). Harrop has a similar view, because he believes that political marketing is not only related to political advertising and political speeches, but also covers the entire range of positioning in the election market. According to Kavanagh, political marketing is a set of strategies and tools used to monitor and study public opinion before and during an election campaign, in order to develop a communication campaign and assess its impact (Menon, 2008).

Menon points out that political marketing must be considered a part of the overall political communication, it is a "method of political communication". Similar to Slavujević, this author advocates an analytical approach to the concept of political marketing, and that it must be viewed as a set of techniques used by parties and other social groups to increase

the number of votes obtained. Although many authors do not emphasize the parts related to the aspects of communication covered by this “science in action”, Lock and Harris (Lock & Harris, 1996) point out that political marketing is responsible for communicating with party membership, media, funding sources and the electorate. Namely, political bodies use political marketing as a set of methods, all in the hope of increasing the demand for their political supply.

Elements of political marketing can also be explained by Kotler’s business marketing process, which Shaferer transposed into political marketing. According to Kotler’s scheme (Kotler, 1972), buyers buy products and services from the seller for money, and the whole process is permeated with information and communication. In the case of political marketing, the process remains the same, but the elements change: voters “buy” with their votes the promises and services from political candidates, with a constant process of information and communication.

The marketing concept is used in the political market to achieve the goals of political institutions, so political marketing is just a skill that sets in motion what is already used in other specific circumstances.

2. POLITICAL CAMPAIGN

Politics can be defined as an activity chosen from the available alternatives, with the aim of making certain decisions concerning part or all of the public of a given society (Meler, 1994). Politics is an open, largely unstructured social process that takes place within a specific formal framework, under the conditions of the existing order.

The word *campaign* comes from the French word *campagne* which means battle or military campaign, and the Italian word *campagna* which means a series of war operations within a strategic goal. Thus, the election campaign could be called a battle for voters/votes, which the candidates try to convince and win over in various ways. Election campaigns have the fundamental task of informing voters about the options available to them and encouraging the electoral participation of citizens (Norris et al, 1999). A campaign is “any planned, coordinated program to achieve certain target results.” Each campaign implies a plan, coordination and management (Novak, 1990).

Over the last few decades, election campaigns have undergone major changes caused by the rapid development of technologies and mass media markets and the rise of political marketing. Thus Norris (Norris, 2004) divides election campaigns into pre-modern, modern, and postmodern.

Political campaigns are a process of lobbying by political parties towards voters. The goal of that process is to win the vote, that is, to motivate voters to go to the polls and give their vote to a specific political entity. It is very important to perform marketing during a political campaign, i.e. to differentiate yourself as much as possible from the competition. Political campaigns, to the greatest extent, take place through direct dialogue with voters and through media appearances.

Several studies show that direct dialogue with voters is cited as one of the main motivating factors that encourage political parties and politicians to use social media (Enli & Skogerbo, 2013), just as political parties and politicians as individuals use different types of media to influence voter behavior, that is, to motivate them (Kalsens, 2016).

According to Šiber (1992), the political marketing within a certain election campaign can be defined as a set of techniques aimed at increasing the acceptability of a candidate to a certain electoral potential and bringing it closer to as many voters as possible. Furthermore, the goal is to point out a noticeable difference in each of these voters in relation to other candidates or opponents, and to increase the number of votes during the campaign with minimal resources.

The lobbying process during the political campaign focuses on a kind of a battle for the public attention in a message-laden environment. The first task is to gain the attention of the target audience. The second task is encouraging the interest for the content of the message. The third task is to strengthen the desire and intention to react in terms of the message. The fourth task is to guide the actions of those who behave in accordance with the message (Cutlip et. al, 2006).

Researchers from the University of West Virginia and George Mason University, Coyne and Leeson (2011) conducted a study that showed that all political activities within a political campaign can be divided into two spheres: non-discretionary and discretionary:

- 1) The non-discretionary sphere includes all the activities of political entities that could be called public activities: politicians perform the tasks required of them, i.e. their actions in this domain are limited by the will of the voters. If they want to keep their positions, politicians must respond to the wishes of those who elected them.
- 2) In the discretionary sphere, there are all the moves and decisions that politicians make hidden from the public eye and because of the interests known only to them. This domain could also be called a secret, since its task is not to cause repercussions among voters. This domain implies risky actions from the point of view of indirect democracy (Coyne & Leeson, 2008)

In political advertising, it is possible to distinguish two main types of campaigns – a positive and a negative one. In general, a positive campaign is considered more acceptable, ethically correct than a negative one. Although there are often exaggerations, untruths and many false promises in a positive campaign, there are still clear differences from the negative one. Unlike the positive, which emphasizes (real or imagined) advantages of the party or candidate and indicates the solutions to the problems that the party or candidate offers, the negative campaign is aimed at highlighting (real or imagined) the negative traits, i.e. shortcomings of opposing parties or candidates.

3. DIGITAL MARKETING IN POLITICS

Digital marketing as a term is broader than the Internet marketing because it encompasses various forms of reaching potential target groups not only based on the use of the Internet. New digital platforms for marketing and marketing web services are being created, i.e. they are created practically every day. The existing social networks regularly introduce new opportunities at a time when all eyes are set on the mobile segment of digital marketing, which is increasingly becoming one of the key factors in the further development of modern business. Digital marketing includes the use of all digital communication channels - from digital television, the Internet, mobile phones to all other forms of digital media.

Some of the specifics of digital marketing that can be observed are (Bush, 2016):

- 1) Digital marketing is cheaper compared to traditional marketing - for example, making graphics for advertising on social networks and renting “space” on a social network is significantly cheaper than renting seconds on television;
- 2) It is more efficient in “initiating” the recipient of the advertising messages, unlike the traditional one, which is more efficient in transmitting subconscious messages;
- 3) It is faster and more efficient, as it is adaptable to frequent changes (flexibility), while marketing on the “usual” communication channels is much slower and less flexible, especially due to the fact that the effects of campaigns and advertisements placed in this way can be seen only later, that is, not in real time;
- 4) It is richer due to the possibility of choosing several different forms of message transmission - image, video, sound, text, or a combination of all or only some of the elements;
- 5) It is more “measurable”, given the many tools that allow accurate measurement of the reach of each advertisement and marketing approach, in real time, which allows for a quick response to potential problems;
- 6) It enables careful and detailed brand building and campaigns building, using a variety of channels, in real time;
- 7) It is more visible and “unlimited”, which means that one marketing campaign can be seen all over the world, given that social networks and the Internet itself know of no boundaries - on the other hand, traditional communication channels are limited by frequency and market coverage (an example of it is the placement of an advertisement on local television, which will be seen by a narrow circle of people, as opposed to the placement on a social network from which the advertisement can be shared and spread without limits);
- 8) It enables a greater degree of involvement by users, through commenting, sharing experiences, evaluating products/services;
- 9) The number of Internet users is constantly growing, which means that the Internet market is constantly expanding, with a minimal chance of saturation, as happens in traditional channels;

- 10) It enables extremely high precision in advertising, through the detailed determination of target groups according to various criteria (gender, age, place of residence, belonging to certain social groups, similar interests, etc.).

Network marketing can provide a lot. Through social networks, a certain message can be sent to a large group of people for free. It is just but a small part of what social networks offer. They transform and upgrade classic marketing approaches. These networks are a relatively new phenomenon in the internet spheres. They represent online communities that typically share common interests and activities, and provide a variety of interaction technologies, blogs, instant messaging, and similar things.

Regarding the relationship between users of social networks and the Internet, i.e. their participation in politics, there have been significant changes compared to the age before this digital era. In more recent times, digital transformation in modern technologies and economic trends are improving the flow of representations, ideas, and narratives across multiple media channels, requiring more active performance models (Parikh, 2012).

When it comes to the political market in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the digital marketing is underused. However, some politicians, younger in age, use digital technologies and social networks very well for their own promotion.

Examples from Bosnia and Herzegovina:

(<https://www.socialbakers.com/statistics/facebook/pages/total/bosnia-and-herzegovina/society/politics>)

DF - 56 645

SDP - 53 477

Senad Šepić - 40 777

Fastest-Growing Politics Pages in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Draško Stanivuković - 34 193

4. POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The precondition for political participation is a healthy democracy that ensures and emphasizes the importance of political and civic participation, in contrast to the elitist, i.e. the formal-representative democracy. Given the interpretation of democracy as the rule of the people, it is clear that they are expected to constantly participate in the work and control of government, in the form of critical thinking, making demands, taking action and participating in decision-making of general interest (Vujčić, 2000).

Political participation for citizens has a dual role. It primarily gives citizens the opportunity to express their opinions and demands. In addition, in countries with developed democracies and political participation, citizens enjoy freedom of expression and action and influence the improvement of the overall quality of life and the growth of political satisfaction. Some authors state that political participation remains a powerful social force for increasing or decreasing inequality of people (Offe, 1999).

When it comes to participation in politics, the following terms are to be distinguished: political involvement, political action, and political participation. Accordingly, the authors Verba, Nie and Kim believe that the interest in politics and the conversation about it do not imply political participation, but political involvement. The mentioned authors claim that political participation includes those activities of citizens that can influence the choice of rulers and/or the actions of the government (Vujčić, 2000).

When it comes to political participation of citizens, there are several forms of political activity. Different authors offer different typologies. Parry, Moyser and Day distinguish: voting in elections, party campaigning, contacting politicians or officials, group activities, and protesting. Voting is further divided into general, local and European, party campaigns to attend rallies and establish funds, and protests to sign petitions, attending protest rallies, organizing petitions, political strikes, protest marches, political boycotts, media contacts, traffic blocking and physical violence. Given the level of legality, the authors classify protests into legal activities, civil disobedience, and violence (Parry et. al, 1992). Electoral participation means the choice of an individual to go or not to go to the polls, while electoral orientation refers to the decision of voters to vote for a particular political party. The study of political participation and abstinence implies

the existence of four models, which can explain this phenomenon (Milošević, 1997).

The typology of political participation was also offered by Kaase and Marsh (1979), who combined conventional and unconventional political participation, i.e. protest.

Non-participation of citizens with the right to vote in voting (i.e. non-going to the polls) is called political abstinence, and such individuals are called abstainers or non-voters. Abstinence is a complex political phenomenon caused and encouraged by a number of factors.

Abstinence can be a political attitude, not an absence of attitude, i.e. a “conscious political decision” (Golubović, 2007) based on thoughtful reasons and justified dissatisfaction and as a social phenomenon, that abstinence can have the potential for democratic transformation of the existing political system. Abstinence does not have to be a refusal to influence government, it can be a form of protest and a way of advocating for reforms (Hanna, 2009).

5. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POLITICAL MARKET IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

The political market in BiH is characterized by negative campaigns and citizens’ perceptions of significant electoral corruption, resulting in low voter turnout.

Table 1 shows the turnout rate of the electorate in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in 2002-2018. There is a declining trend, with a more pronounced difference in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The total turnout percentage does not reach 60% in the observed period, which raises the aforementioned question of legitimacy, because if we take into account that a certain political option wins a maximum of half of the votes, it is in fact about a quarter of the electorate. Therefore, it is important for society to act in the direction of increasing turnout in order to increase the integrity of state institutions. For this reason, some countries have introduced mandatory voting for all citizens.²

² Countries where voting is mandatory (mainly from 18 or 21 years of age) are: Mexico, Honduras, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay, Argentina, Brazil, Panama, Dominican Republic, Belgium, Luxembourg, Greece, Cyprus, Lebanon, Egypt, Congo, Thailand, Singapore,

Table 1: Turnout in elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2002-2018, %

Year	Number of Voters in Republika Srpska	Voter turnout, %	Number of Voters in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina	Voter turnout, %
2018	1,261,645	57.7	2,093,784	51.8
2016	1,189,430	59.5	1,925,276	50.6
2014	1,222,266	56.9	2,013,826	53.0
2012	1,199,179	59.2	1,866,169	54.8
2010	1,194,622	56.19	1,916,906	56.7
2008	1,110,280	58.3	1,833,639	53.3
2006	1,036,731	57.1	1,697,556	54.2
2004	959,437	48.6	1,310,214	45.0
2002	1,018,051	52.9	1,324,090	57.4

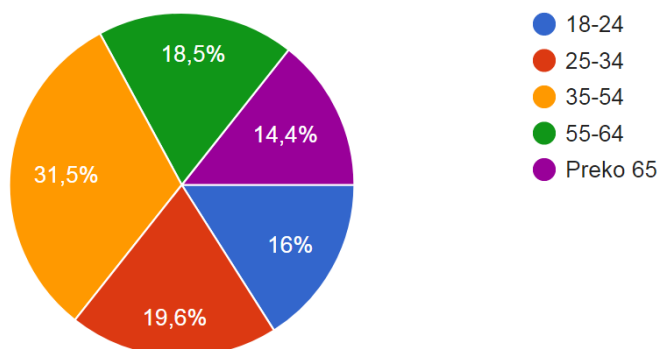
Source: author's calculation according to the data from the Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina
For the research part of this paper, political abstainers were surveyed.

THE RESULTS

Australia and Nauru (Source: CIA.gov The World Factbook). In Mexico, there are no official sanctions for not going to the polls, but those who ignore the election face a kind of social stigma. Australians who do not show up at the polls can face a fine of \$ 20 to \$ 55. This has resulted in the turnout in Australia being around 91%. A Greek resident who refuses to vote may have trouble obtaining a driver's license or a passport. In Bolivia, voters must get a stamp on their ballot ID Card. Those who do not have it can face a salary shortfall of up to 3 months. If you do not go to the polls in Belgium, you will face a fine, but what is even more difficult is the fact that if you do not participate in at least four election processes within 15 years, you may lose the right to vote for 10 years. Also, those who do not vote can hardly get a job in the public sector. It is therefore not surprising that the turnout in this country is around 90%.

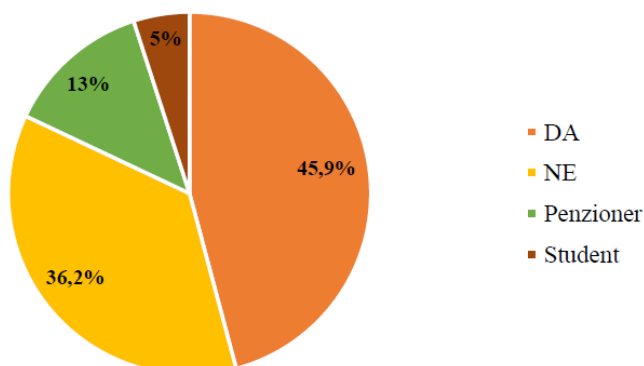
Regarding the age of the respondents, all structures are represented. The highest percentage of ages is expected to be 35-54 (31.5%), followed by ages 25-34 (19.6%), followed by ages 55-64 (18.5%), and young people aged 18-24 (16%) and the least number of respondents is over 65 years of age (14.4%)

Age Range:



According to (un)employment, the largest number of respondents are employed (45.9%). Considering that Bosnia and Herzegovina is one of the countries with the highest unemployment rate, thus the category of respondents from Republika Srpska is the second largest in the category of the unemployed (36.2%), pensioners 13% and students 5%.

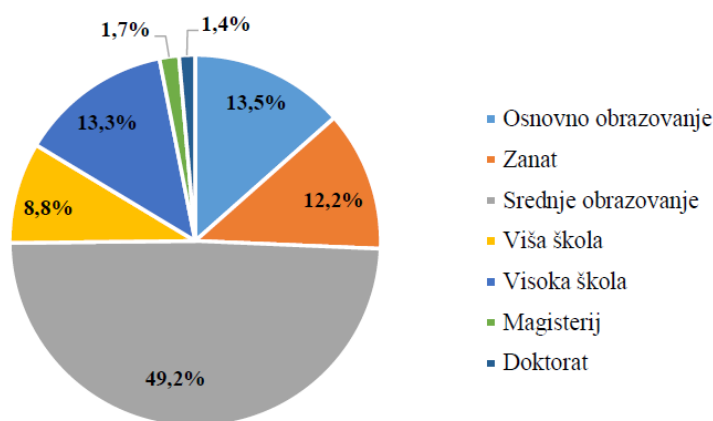
Are you employed?



According to the level of education, the largest category of respondents has a secondary education (49.2%), while other levels of education have a significantly lower participation, but such a situation corresponds to the structure of the population.

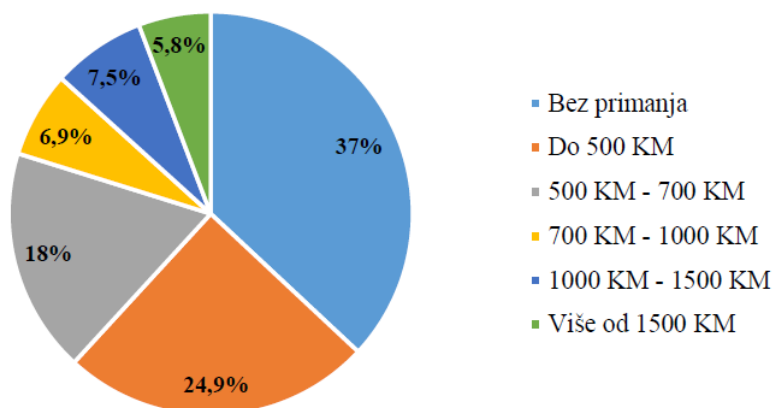
It is followed by the category of primary education (13.5%), a significantly smaller category of respondents with higher education (13.3%), crafts (12.2%), respondents with college education (8.8%) and minimal participation of respondents with a master's degree (1.7%) and a PhD degrees (1.4%).

Level of Education



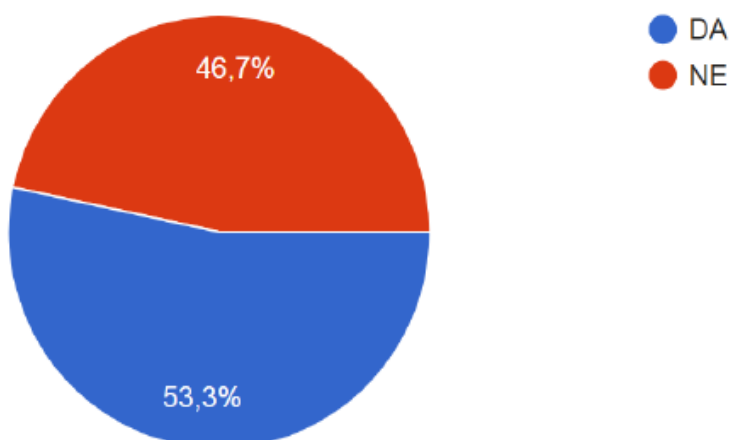
If respondents are observed from the level of their monthly income, the highest percentage of 37% of respondents is unemployed. They are followed by respondents with income of up to BAM 500 (24.9%), respondents with income of BAM 500 – 700 (18%), and a significantly lower share of respondents with income of BAM 700 – 1000 (6.9 %), BAM 1000 – 1500 (7.5%) and higher than BAM 1500 (5.8%).

Monthly Income:



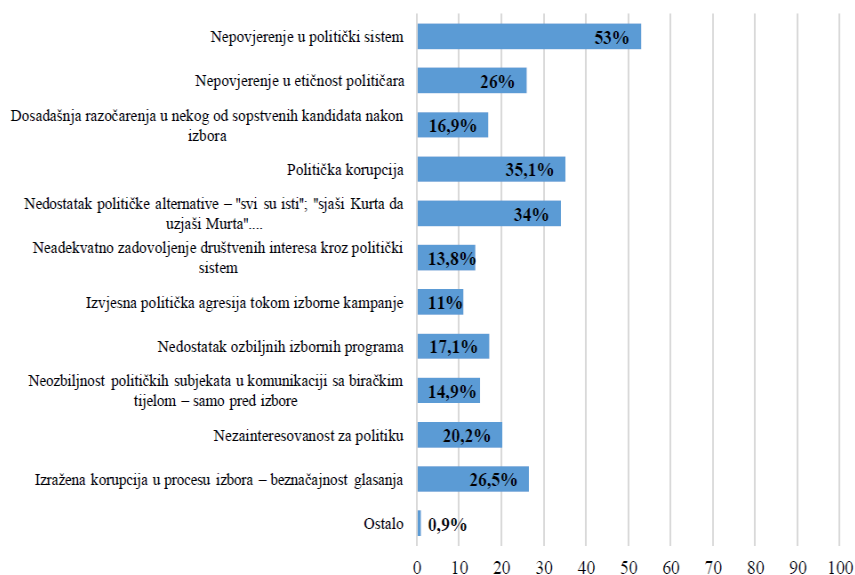
The following graph leads to the conclusion that the category of abstainers in Republika Srpska is inconsistent, to a certain percentage. Namely, 53.3% of respondents answered that they went to the polls at least once in the last 3 cycles, while 46.7% of respondents are constantly in the category of abstainers.

Have you voted at least once during the last 3 election processes?



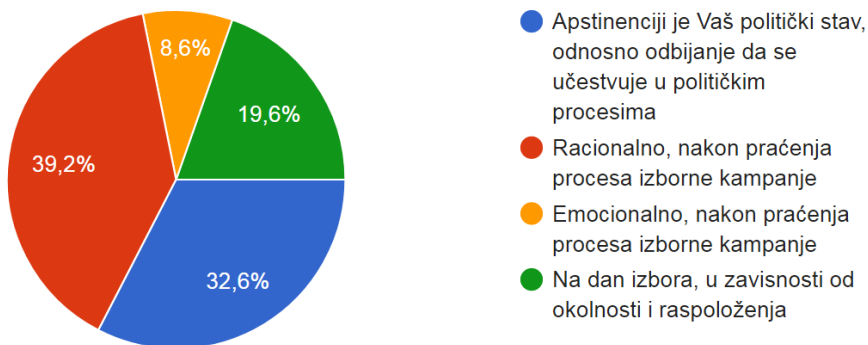
Political abstainers are an inhomogeneous category, because there are many motives for the decision to abstain. From Table 2 below, some of the motives can be seen. According to the frequency, the highest percentage of responses is distrust in the political system (53%); political corruption (35.1%); lack of political alternative (34%); pronounced corruption in the election process (26.5%); lack of interest in politics (20.2%); and in smaller percentages there are the following reasons: lack of serious election programs, inadequate satisfaction of social interests through the political system, a certain political aggression during the election campaign and others.

Table 2: Reasons for “not going to the polls” (multiple answers possible):



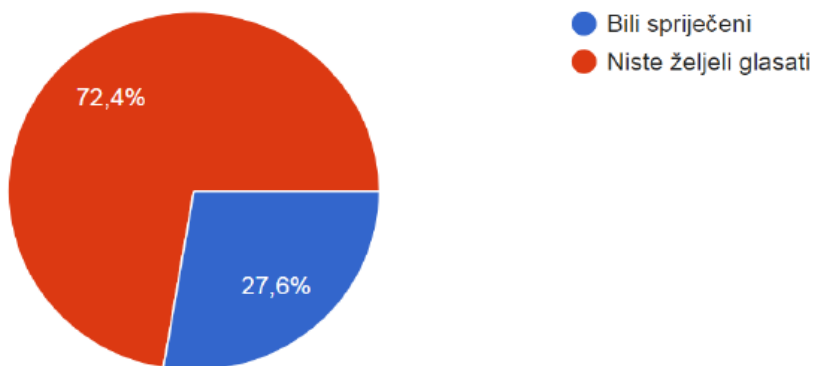
The way in which abstainers make a decision on (non)voting is shown in the chart below. It is noticed that permanent abstainers (that is their political position) are represented by 32.6%, and a higher percentage of respondents (39.2%) of those who make a decision rationally, after monitoring the election campaign. A significantly smaller percentage of respondents make a decision on election day, depending on their mood (19.6%) and the smallest percentage of respondents are those who make a decision on (non)voting emotionally.

How the decision on (non)voting is made :



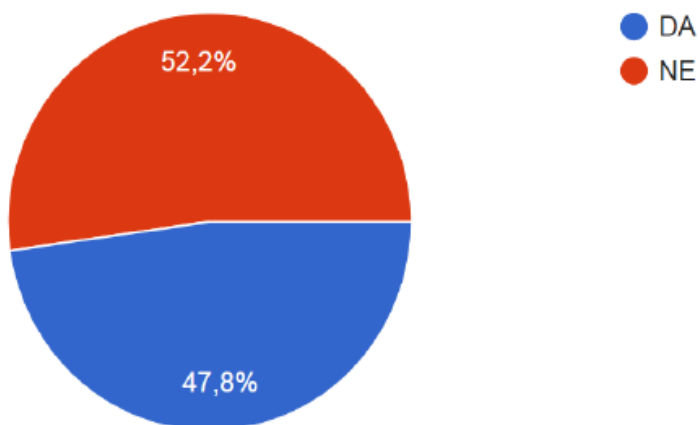
The following chart shows the dominant share of respondents who did not want to vote (72.4%), and 27.6% of those who were prevented. If this is compared with the previous results, it can be concluded that abstainers change from the election cycle to the election cycle.

In case you did not vote in the last election, did you:



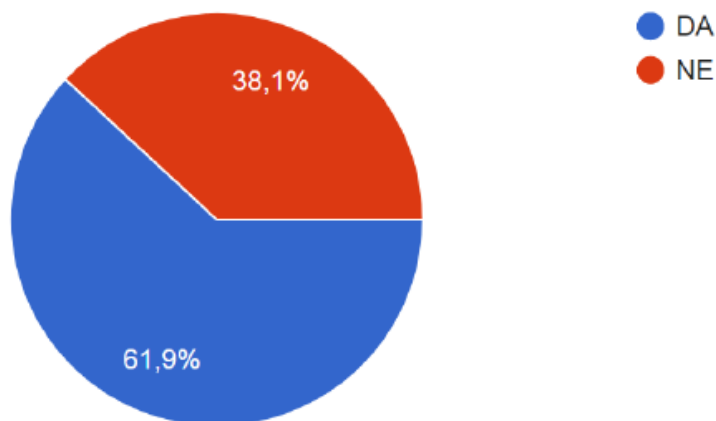
The answer to the question of how important is the context and content of political campaigns is given in the following chart. A higher percentage of respondents (52.2%) gave a negative answer, while 47.8% of respondents confirmed that this is a significant factor when making a decision on (non)voting.

Is the context and content of political campaigns the main factor in making a voting decision in your opinion?



Electoral corruption is very present in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska, so it is not surprising that 61.9% of respondents think that their vote is not important, while 38.1% think that it is.

Do you think that your vote is not important?



As in the previous questionnaire similar answers were given when it comes to the category of respondents, who are political abstainers. The poor economic and social situation in Republika Srpska, which is most

pronounced through the high unemployment rate, inadequate lowest incomes and relatively high prices and the amount of the consumer basket (over BAM 2000 for a family of four) is the reason why the highest percentage of respondents (32.33%) answered to give their vote to the political entity that would offer more jobs, higher workers' rights, higher salaries, pensions and social benefits, as well as a better social policy. In addition, nepotism and party employment are unavoidable and it is almost impossible to get a job without belonging to a political option, so the same percentage was responsible for non-party employment. The second largest group of answers is those who do not have an opinion, and other answers are in a significantly lower percentage.

Table 3: What elements should a Party's program and political campaign contain in order for you to cast your vote? Outline your vision.

ANSWERS	%
More jobs and more workers' rights; Higher salaries, pensions and social benefits; Better social policy; Non-party employment;	32.33% (117)
Youth employment and retention; Respect for expertise and education	7.73% (28)
The rule of law; Anti-corruption; Confiscation of illegally acquired property through the Law on the Origin of Property	5.25% (19)
Economic development; Attracting foreign investment; Better standard of living	9.12% (33)
Agricultural development and greater support for farmers; Rural development	1.66% (6)
Fulfilling pre-election promises; Fair campaign and concrete proposals; No lies	6.90% (25)
Changes and something new	4.97% (18)
I do not believe in the content of political programs and consider campaigns to be a mere farce and a show for potential voters	1.93% (7)
Preservation of Republika Srpska; Quality leaders as political campaign leaders	1.93% (7)
I have no opinion	28.18% (102)

CONCLUSION

Throughout the history of the development of civilization, social systems have changed, social communities have emerged and the system of governance has developed. In modern states, a democratic political system dominates, characterized by mutual tolerance, a tendency towards compromise, dialogue and a civilized resolution of conflicts of interest.

Political marketing is an area in which all elements of marketing are used, as a scientific discipline, applied in the political market, through the parallel sale of services by political parties, on the one hand and voters, as a segmented target market, i.e. consumers. Depending on the application of the mentioned concept, the success of a certain political subject on the political scene also depends.

The development of mass media has created new information and communication systems, that are more efficient, cheaper and more accessible to users, and that have enabled the development of new techniques of political marketing with the aim of shaping public opinion.

The political market in Bosnia and Herzegovina is characterized by leading parties, as indicated by the formal attachment of parties to the individual and as such is underdeveloped, compared to the political markets of developed democratic systems. It is necessary to influence the change of awareness of voters, who should, in the future, look for quality election programs, which will bring better economic and social opportunities, through increasing living standards, higher employment rates and reducing the departure of young people from the country.

National rhetoric records a significant segment on the supply side of political entities, which allows political parties to win significant participation in the election result with very few quality programs.

The previously presented research showed that the turnout in the elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina has decreased, and that the question of the legitimacy of the government at all levels arises, given that they ultimately represent about 20-25% of the electorate. It is necessary to reform the electoral system and increase the motivation of voters in the election process, because in that way the entire social environment is created, which should not be created through the voting of only half of the electorate.

By summarizing the results of the 2018 parliamentary elections and the ways of conducting political campaigns, as well as the overall atmosphere and circumstances in which the elections were conducted, it can be concluded that it is necessary to change the Election Law in Bosnia and Herzegovina because the electoral will of citizens is violated by stealing election results, on the one hand, and the decreasing turnout of those who consider the mentioned process becoming meaningless in this way, on the other hand.

Accordingly, the characteristic of the electoral process is political abstinence as a form of political action, more often than not than just being disinterested in political events. One of the positive solutions could be the introduction of compulsory voting, because in that way corruption during the elections, which is significantly present in Bosnia and Herzegovina, would be prevented, on the one hand, and on the other hand, a completely legitimately elected government would be obtained.

One of the key factors influencing a large percentage of political abstainers is the widespread view that the election process is corrupt and that it is "not worth it" to go to the polls. Changing this attitude of a large number of voters is possible through several models, of which the fastest one and with the great efficiency is the introduction of compulsory voting and/or the introduction of scanners at polling stations. In the first variant, electoral corruption would be prevented, on the one hand, and the full legitimacy of the government would be obtained, on the other hand.

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